

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. to 27. (canceled).

28. (currently amended): A method for producing an active carbon, comprising a step of adding an alkaline earth metal compound to a raw material of active carbon and heat-treating ~~it~~ to form a carbonized product, and a step of mixing the carbonized product produced by the heat treatment with an alkali metal compound and heating and thereby activating it.

29. (currently amended): A method for producing an active carbon, comprising a step of adding an alkaline earth metal compound to a raw material of active carbon and heat-treating ~~it~~ in the vapor of an alkali metal compound to form a carbonized product, and a step of mixing the carbonized product produced by the heat treatment with an alkali metal compound and heating and thereby activating it.

30. (currently amended): The method for producing an active carbon as claimed in claim 28 or 29, wherein the temperature of performing the heat treatment step to form the carbonized product is kept in a range from 400 to less than 600°C in a first heat-treatment stage and is kept in a range from 600 to 900°C in a second heat-treatment stage.

31. (original): The method for producing an active carbon as claimed in claim 28, wherein the alkali metal compound is an alkali metal hydroxide.

32. (original): The method for producing an active carbon as claimed in claim 28 or 29, wherein the alkali metal compound is a compound containing at least one member selected from the group consisting of potassium, sodium and cesium.

33. (currently amended): The method for producing an active carbon as claimed in claim 28 or 29, wherein the carbonized product is an easily-graphitizable carbon selected from the group consisting of a petroleum-base coke, a coal-base pitch coke, a polyvinylchloride coal and 3,5-dimethylphenolformaldehyde resin coal.

34. (previously presented): The method for producing an active carbon as claimed in claim 28, wherein the raw material of active carbon is a thermoplastic resin, a pitch-base material, a condensed polycyclic hydrocarbon compound or a condensed heterocyclic compound.

35. (currently amended): The method for producing an active carbon claim 29, wherein the raw material of active carbon is a thermoplastic resin, a pitch-base material, a condensed polycyclic hydrocarbon compound or a condensed heterocyclic compound.

36. (currently amended): The method for producing an active carbon as claimed in claim 28, further comprising a step of coating a porous carbon layer ~~comprising non-graphitizable carbon~~ on the surface of the active carbon.

37. (currently amended): The method for producing an active carbon as claimed in claim 29, further comprising a step of coating a porous carbon layer ~~comprising non-graphitizable carbon~~ on the active carbon layer.

38. (currently amended): The method for producing an active carbon as claimed in claim 30, further comprising a step of coating a porous carbon layer ~~comprising non-graphitizable carbon~~ on the surface of the active carbon.

39. (currently amended): The method for producing an active carbon as claimed in claim 38, wherein the coating step is a step of coating a coating material which produces the coating porous carbon layer between a the first heat-treatment stage of 400 to less than 600°C and a the second heat-treatment stage of 600 to 900 °C 650 to 850°C.

40. (currently amended): The method for producing an active carbon layer as claimed in claim 39, wherein the coating material contains ~~a non-graphitizable carbon material at least~~ one carbon material selected from the group consisting of phenol resin, polyvinyl alcohol resin, furan resin, cellulose resin, polystyrene resin, polyimide resin and epoxy resin which produces a hard carbon by heat treatment.

41. (canceled).

42. (new): The method for producing an active carbon as claimed in claim 28, wherein the alkaline earth metal compound is at least one member selected from the group consisting of alkaline earth metal and oxides, hydroxides, chlorides, bromides, iodides, fluorides, phosphates, carbonates, sulfides, sulfates and nitrates of an alkaline earth metal.

43. (new): The method for producing an active carbon as claimed in claim 28, wherein the alkaline earth metal compound is calcium compound.

44. (new): The method for producing an active carbon as claimed in claim 28, wherein the addition of an alkaline earth metal compound powder to a raw material powder of active carbon is carried out by adding powder of an alkaline earth metal compound to a raw material powder or to a melt of the raw material.

45. (new): The method for producing an active carbon as claimed in claim 29, wherein the alkaline earth metal compound is at least one member selected from the group consisting of alkaline earth metal and oxides, hydroxides, chlorides, bromides, iodides, fluorides, phosphates, carbonates, sulfides, sulfates and nitrates of an alkaline earth metal.

46. (new): The method for producing an active carbon as claimed in claim 29, wherein the alkaline earth metal compound is calcium compound.

47. (new): The method for producing an active carbon as claimed in claim 29, wherein the addition of an alkaline earth metal compound powder to a raw material powder of active carbon is carried out by adding powder of an alkaline earth metal compound to a raw material powder or to a melt of the raw material.

48. (new): The method of producing an active carbon as claimed in claim 28, wherein the alkali metal compound is at least one selected from the group consisting of potassium hydroxide and sodium hydroxide.

49. (new): The method of producing an active carbon as claimed in claim 29, wherein the alkali metal compound is at least one selected from the group consisting of potassium hydroxide and sodium hydroxide.